

Supporting the Warfighter When and How They Need it Most

A major mission performed by Defense Distribution Depot Hill, UT (DDHU) is assembly of the Army's Deployable Medical Systems or DEPMEDS. These self-contained, portable units are capable of being positioned quickly in an area of operations during war or a national emergency. DDHU assembles, modifies, repairs, rebuilds, certifies and stores the modular units that can contain operating rooms, x-ray equipment, blood labs and pharmacies. The units can range in size from a single general-purpose lab to a 1,000-bed hospital containing 12,000 line items.

*Mark Nixon,
Container Handler
Operator, moving
one of the
deployable units.*



*George Coray,
Mechanic, assists
in the building of
the deployable
units.*

In support of the Global War on Terrorism, DDHU's DEPMEDS mission has been extremely busy. "The typical workflow is usually much smaller over a sustained period of time," said John Wojciechowski, DDHU Chief of the Stock Maintenance Division. "Occasionally, we have a surge for a single large hospital. For example, for all of fiscal year 2003 we processed just under 31,000 lines for all our hospital builds. Right now I have 31,000 lines in process already - we're only one month into the fiscal year — as well as 70 hospital builds in process with a total of 30,000 lines.

"The increase in hospital builds is a direct result of the war effort," Wojciechowski said. "We had a similar peak early in the year to support Medical Units with deployment orders. The hospital builds we are working on now are resupply packages as well initial support for stateside Units who may be deploying soon."

"Our primary customer is the U.S. Army Medical Material Agency (USAMMA)," Wojciechowski said. "They identify the type of hospital to be built, drop the requirements into the system and order additional supplies from their prime vendor contractor. Often times the hospital configuration changes while it is in work, or the Unit's mission is modified and the required delivery date is moved up." These continuously changing requirements are a challenge the DEPMEDS personnel overcome every day.

In addition to building complete and deployable hospitals, DDHU's DEPMEDS personnel have been building personal

lifesaver kits. These include items like iodine, bandages, gauze, surgical blades, scissors, and gloves.

"We are also building 5,000 Combat Lifesaver kits which amount to a medic's kit," Wojciechowski said. "There are 106 items in each one and include items like catheters, sodium chloride, bandages, gloves, sponges, scissors, atropine, airway tubes, and splints."

All this work is done by a surprisingly small number of talented people - only 44 people are assigned to this area. And they are very well trained. Like all of the Defense Distribution Center's (DDC) distribution centers, DDHU uses the Distribution Standard System (DSS) for inventory and warehouse management, but the DEPMEDS mission requires a unique module within DSS that allows personnel to control our workload drops based on each individual hospital build, Wojciechowski said. "Because of this, each packer and production controller requires special training in DSS."

Additionally, to ensure quality control for this important mission, they always have at least two packers working each build and they check one another's work. When the build is completed the Packer Leader then does one more quality check for completeness and accuracy.

"I know this sounds like a trite phrase, but it's particularly true of this group of people: they truly work together as a team and are all very focused on the mission," Wojciechowski said, "it is an honor to work with them."



DEPMEDS Set Assembly area.